

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-28 are pending in the application. The Applicants hereby request further examination and reconsideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and these remarks.

On page 2 of the office action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-11, 13, 15-18, 20-25, and 27-28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Burwell in view of Pathak. On page 6, the Examiner objected to claims 12, 14, 19, and 26 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that those claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

For the following reasons, the Applicants submit that all claims are allowable over the cited references.

Burwell has a priority date of March 14, 2003. Submitted herewith is a Declaration under 37 CFR 1.131, which demonstrates that (i) the present invention was conceived prior to March 14, 2003, and (ii) the Applicants exercised reasonable diligence in preparing and filing the present patent application on June 24, 2003. The Applicants therefore submit that the present invention predates Burwell, that Burwell is not a proper prior-art reference, and that the rejections of claims based on Burwell should be withdrawn. It is therefore submitted that the rejections of claims 1-11, 13, 15-18, 20-25, and 27-28 over Burwell have been overcome.

It is submitted that the objected-to claims 12, 14, 19, and 26 are allowable because each of them depends from an allowable base claim.

In view of the above remarks, the Applicants believe that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Therefore, the Applicants believe that the entire application is now in condition for allowance, and early and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Fees

During the pendency of this application, the Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge payment of any filing fees for presentation of extra claims under 37 CFR 1.16 and any patent application processing fees under 37 CFR 1.17 or credit any overpayment to **Mendelsohn & Associates, P.C. Deposit Account No. 50-0782**.

The Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to treat any concurrent or future reply, requiring a petition for extension of time under 37 CFR § 1.136 for its timely submission, as incorporating a petition for extension of time for the appropriate length of time if not submitted with the reply.

Respectfully submitted,

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